LIST OF KEY QUALITY ASSURANCE DEFINITIONS

Document

Any written, recorded information that is subject to change over time. Procedures, plans, policies, and records are documents. Documents may be controlled. See Records.

Environmental Conditions

The description of a physical medium (e.g., air, water, soil, sediment) or biological system expressed in terms of its physical, chemical, radiological, or biological characteristics.

Environmental Processes

Manufactured or natural processes that produce discharges to or that impact the ambient environment.

Environmental Data

Any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology.

Environmental Data Operations

Work performed to obtain, use, or report information pertaining to environmental processes and conditions.

Environmental Programs

A term pertaining to any work or activities involving the environment, including: characterization of environmental processes and conditions; environmental monitoring; environmental research and development; the design, construction, and operation of environmental technologies; and laboratory operations on environmental samples.

Program

A functional unit of the DES conducting a defined set of activities and deliverables or otherwise a core set of related functions. This administrative function will often be found at the Bureau level, but this varies across DES. An example would be the Limnology Program within the Watershed Management Bureau of the Water Division.

Program Manager

The person responsible for conducting a specific DES program; this program management function is vested in people at different administrative levels within DES. The term project manager is used to describe staff that have direct knowledge and/or responsibility at the project or site-specific level.

Quality Assurance (QA)

An integrated system of management activities involving planning, implementation, documentation, assessment, reporting, and quality improvement to ensure that a process, item, or service is of the type and quality needed and expected by the client.

DES Quality Assurance Manager

The person assigned to manage (DES's) QA system.

Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP), Generic

A planning document, written to EPA specifications, which describes quality assurance procedures for a program or a set of projects. Use in conjunction with a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP – see Definition).

Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)

A planning document, written to EPA specifications, which describes quality assurance procedures for a specific project.

DES Quality Assurance Team

A group of DES staff from various programs with interest and expertise in QA/QC matters which provides assistance to the Quality Assurance Manager and DES programs on QA/QC matters.

Quality Control (QC)

The overall system of technical activities that measures the attributes and performance of a process, item, or service against defined standards to verify that they meet the stated requirements established by the customer; operational techniques and activities that are used to fulfill requirements for quality.

Quality Management

That aspect of the overall management system of the organization that determines and implements the quality policy. Quality management includes strategic planning, allocation of resources, and other systematic activities (e.g., planning, implementation, and assessment) pertaining to the quality system.

Quality Management Plan (QMP)

A formal document or manual, usually prepared once for an organization, that describes the quality system in terms of the organizational structure, functional responsibilities of management and staff, lines of authority, and required interfaces for those planning, implementing, and assessing all activities conducted.

Records

A completed document that provides objective evidence of an item or process. Records may include photographs, drawings, magnetic tape, or other data recording media. See documents.

Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP)/Site Specific Plan (SSP)

A planning document used in conjunction with a Generic Program QAPP, which describes the quality assurance procedures for a specific project/task that is not covered by the generic QAPP for the program.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

A written document that details the method for an operation, analysis, or action with thoroughly prescribed techniques and steps, and that is officially approved as the method of performing certain routine or repetitive tasks.